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EXAMINER	
JEAN GILLES, JUDE	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2143	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/27/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/939,136	BROWN ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jude J. Jean-Gilles	2143	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *08 November 2006*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1,3,4,6-30 and 43-72* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1,3,4,6-30 and 43-72* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *08/24/2001* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This Action is in regards to the Reply received on 11/08/2006.

Response to Amendment

1. This action is responsive to the application filed on 08/24/2001 and reply received on 11/08/2006. Claims 2, 5, 31-42 and 73-76 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 12, 14 and 25, have been amended. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-30 and 43-72 remain pending and represent an "E-MAIL MESSAGING SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ENHANCED RICH MEDIA DELIVERY".

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments in the Reply dated 11/08/2006 with respect to rejected claims 1-4, 13, 27-30, 32-40, and 73-76 have been carefully considered, but are not deemed fully persuasive. Furthermore, In the Previous Office Action the Examiner has allowed claims 43-72 and has recently discussed the possibility of an Examiner's amendment to allow the previously rejected claims. The Examiner thanks the applicant's representative for discussing such matters. As it is the Office procedure to update all searches before allowance of any subject matter, an updated search has been conducted and has revealed the patents below which disclose the subject matter of this application.

In response to Applicant's arguments, 37 CFR § 1.11(c) requires applicant to "clearly point out the patentable novelty which he or she thinks the claims present in

view of the state of the art disclosed by the references cited or the objections made. He or she must show the amendments avoid such references or objections."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. **Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-30 and 62-63** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Gough et al (Gough), Patent No. 6,360,221 B1.

Regarding **claims 1, 3, 4, and 6-30**, Gough discloses:

1. (currently amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of another user in the first user group and a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), a method comprising:

after said e-mail message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group, directing the e-mail message onto an e-mail enhancement path, including (i)

receiving the e-mail message at said first server, (ii) altering the e-mail message, and (iii) directing the altered e-mail message to a second server located on the e-mail enhancement path (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

adding additional rich media content to said e-mail message using the e-mail enhancement path to produce an enhanced e-mail message (fig. 2B; column 6, line 12-39); and

thereafter, directing the enhanced e-mail message from the e-mail enhancement path to the intended recipient (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

2. (canceled)

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said receiving includes using TCP/IP socket communication (column 3,lines 50-67).

4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said receiving includes using direct API access (fig. 11; column 14, lines 38-45).

5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said e-mail message includes a header section, which contains information regarding the originating user and the intended recipient, and wherein said altering the e-mail message includes separating and modifying the header section in a predetermined way (fig. 3, item 36).

7. (previously amended) The method of claim 6 wherein said separating and modifying the header section includes parsing and temporarily storing the originating

user and intended recipient information contained in the header section in a designated file separate from the e-mail message (fig. 3, item 36).

8. (previously amended) The method of claim 6 wherein said modifying the header section in said predetermined way includes inactivating said information regarding the originating user and intended recipient contained in the header section, and adding an alternate header section containing active information regarding an alternate sender and an alternate message recipient (fig. 3, item 36).

9. (previously amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said inactivating includes adding a predetermined prefix to the originating user and intended recipient information contained in the header section such that said information is inactivated (fig. 3, item 36).

10. (previously amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said adding the alternate header section includes specifying said second server as the alternate message recipient (fig. 3, item 36).

11. (previously amended) The method of claim 8 wherein said directing the enhanced message to the intended recipient includes deleting the alternate header section, and reactivating the originating user and intended recipient information contained in the header section of the e-mail message (fig. 3, item 36).

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said directing the altered e-mail message to the second server includes using TCP/IP socket communication (column 3,lines 50-67).

13. (previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said directing the e-mail message onto the e-mail enhancement path includes adding a request for additional rich media content to the e-mail message (fig. 2B; column 6, line 12-39).

14. (currently amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), a method

comprising:

after said e-mail message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group, directing the e-mail message onto an e-mail enhancement path (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

adding additional rich media content to said e-mail message using the e-mail enhancement path to produce an enhanced e-mail message (fig. 2B; column 6, line 12-39); and

thereafter, directing the enhanced e-mail message from the e-mail enhancement path to the intended recipient including adding a request for additional rich media content to the e-mail message and adding said request for additional rich media content to said e-mail message includes providing a validation of the request such that said

additional rich media content is added to said e-mail message responsive to said validation (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61;column 3, lines 50-67).

15. (previously amended) The method of claim 14 wherein said adding the request for additional rich media content further includes inserting one or more reference tags into said e-mail message (column 14, lines 15-36).

16. (previously amended) The method of claim 15 wherein said providing the validation of the request for additional rich media content includes assigning a desired set of rules for said validation, and generating the validation according to the desired set of rules (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61;column 3, lines 50-67).

17. (previously amended) The method of claim 15 wherein said inserting one or more reference tags into said e-mail message includes adding a message ID tag for identifying the e-mail message, which message ID tag is unique to said e-mail message (column 14, lines 15-36).

18. (previously amended) The method of claim 15 wherein said inserting one or more reference tags into said e-mail message includes adding a group ID tag for identifying the e-mail message as being sent by said first user group (column 14, lines 15-36).

19. (previously amended) The method of claim 15 wherein said inserting one or more reference tags into said e-mail message includes adding a template ID tag for identifying the additional rich media content to be added to the e-mail message (column 14, lines 15-36).

20. (previously amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said adding the template ID tag is performed responsive to a specified action taken by the originating user (column 14, lines 15-36).

21. (previously amended) The method of claim 19 wherein said first user group is subject to control at an administrative level, and wherein said adding the template ID tag is performed responsive to an administrative selection rather than responsive to action taken by the originating user (column 14, lines 15-36).

22. (previously amended) The method of Claim 15 further comprising recording said reference tags in a database (column 14, lines 15-36).

23. (previously amended) The method of claim 15 wherein said e-mail message includes a header section, which contains information regarding the originating user and the intended recipient, and wherein said inserting one or more reference tags into said e-mail message includes adding one or more of said reference tags to the header section of the e-mail message (column 14, lines 15-36).

24. (previously amended) The method of claim 15 wherein said e-mail message includes a header section, which contains information regarding the originating user and the intended recipient, and wherein said inserting one or more reference tags into said e-mail message includes adding one or more of said reference tags to the e-mail message outside of the header section (column 14, lines 15-36).

25. (currently amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which

first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server, and said messaging system further defines an in-coming e-mail message path to each user of the first user group from the first server at least for receiving an external e-mail message originating outside the first user group and directed to one or more of the users of the first user group (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract) a method comprising:

after said e-mail message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group, directing the e-mail message onto an e-mail enhancement path by routing the e-mail message to an out-going message path, which includes the enhancement path, and which includes at least one different process as compared to the incoming e-mail message path(column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

adding additional rich media content to said e-mail message using the e-mail enhancement path to produce an enhanced e-mail message(fig. 2B; column 6, line 12-39); and

thereafter, directing the enhanced e-mail message from the e-mail enhancement path to the intended recipient (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61;column 3, lines 50-67).

26. (previously amended) The method of claim 25 wherein said routing the e-mail message to an out-going message path includes directing the e-mail message through a second server, which second server is outside of the in-coming e-mail message path (fig. 1, items 12 and 15).

27. (previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said adding additional rich media content to the e-mail message includes creating one or more rich media templates to serve as said additional rich media content (column 14, lines 15-36).

28. (previously amended) The method of claim 27 wherein said creating one or more templates includes implementing a set of computer code compatible with the Internet, said set of computer code including instructions for displaying specified rich media content (column 14, lines 15-36).

29. (previously amended) The method of claim 28 wherein said creating one or more rich media templates further includes adding an insertion tag for identifying a point in said rich media template at which point at least a portion of said e-mail message is to be inserted into the rich media template (column 14, lines 15-36).

30. (Original) The method of claim 28 wherein said set of computer code is in HTML.

31-42. (Canceled)

62. (previously amended) A computer program arrangement in a computer readable medium for use in a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least

one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said computer program arrangement comprising:

first instructions for directing the e-mail message to a predetermined location after said e-mail message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the predetermined location, second instructions for adding additional rich media content to said e-mail message to produce an enhanced e-mail message (fig. 2B; column 6, line 12-39); and

third instructions for directing the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61;column 3, lines 50-67; figs. 4, and 8; Note that any number of instructions can be used in directing the message).

63. (Original) The computer program arrangement of claim 62 wherein said first, second and third instructions are distributed at least among the first user group and the first server (figs. 4, and 8).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (see Mintz; a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. **Claims 43-61 and 64-72** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gough in view of Shapiro et al (Shapiro) U.S. patent No. 6965926 B1.

Regarding claim 43, Gough discloses the invention substantially as claimed. Gough teaches in a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to

the Internet by a connection other than said first server, said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), a method comprising :

after said email message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group, adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall; at the first location, identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21; column 13, lines 18-26);

forwarding the e-mail message to a second location outside the firewall; at the second location, adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (figs. 1 and 3; column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67). However Gough does not disclose the details of "directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall and forwarding the e-mail message to a second location outside the firewall.

In the same field of endeavor, Shapiro discloses a "*Those skilled in the art will be familiar with configuring multiple computers to operate as a single server with farms of computers functioning as firewalls, database servers, proxy servers, and process load balancers... he dynamic content server may also be implemented to handle security protocols related to the content. Some of the content may be personal, confidential or proprietary. The dynamic content server (as well as the front-end client module 610 and the receiving email client module 670) may use custom or commercially available security protocols that may be overlaid onto content streams as they exit the front-end node 405 and the dynamic content server 440 in order to provide a secure email environment. In the exemplary embodiment, a conventional triple DES security protocol is preferred to be*

overlaid on outgoing streams of content to provide secure messaging. Other security protocols may be used as well..."[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67].

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the networking art at the time the invention was made to have incorporated Shapiro's teachings of firewalls to secure an e-mail message, with the enhanced e-mail within an enhancement path teachings of Gough, for the purpose of "*to* provide a comprehensive solution for receiving and viewing content-rich communications and messages that enable efficient delivery of such messages while avoiding the need for large downloads and issues with latency..." as stated by Shapiro in lines 25-31 of column 3. By this rationale **claim 43** is rejected.

Regarding claims 44-61 and 64-72, the combination Gough-Shapiro discloses:

44. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server, a method comprising:

after said e-mail message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group, directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67];

at the first location, adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content; forwarding the e-mail message to a second location outside the firewall [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67];

at the second location, adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

45. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a method comprising:

adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, directing the e-mail

message to a first location inside the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the first location, identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content according to a predetermined set of rules (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

forwarding the e-mail message to a second location outside the firewall;

at the second location, adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

46. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a method comprising:

placing said e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall;

at the first location, adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content according to a predetermined set of rules (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

forwarding the e-mail message to a second location outside the firewall (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the second location, adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21).

47. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a method comprising :

adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, directing the e-mail

message to a first location inside the firewall (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the first location, identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

forwarding the e-mail message, after said providing the validation, to a second location inside the firewall (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the second location, selectively adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

48. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a method comprising:

placing said e-mail message en route to the intended recipient; directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the first location, adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

forwarding the e-mail message, after providing the validation, to a second location inside the firewall (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the second location, selectively adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

49. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a method comprising:

adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the first location, identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content according to a predetermined set of rules (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

forwarding the e-mail message to a second location inside the firewall;

at the second location, selectively adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

50. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a method comprising :

placing said e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the first location, adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content according to a predetermined set of rules (column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

forwarding the e-mail message to a second location inside the firewall(see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

at the second location, selectively adding the desired additional rich media content to said e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and thereafter, redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21).

51. (previously amended) In multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

means for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, means for directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

means for receiving the e-mail message at the first location, for identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content, said identifying means being located inside the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

means for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to the validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message, said receiving means being located outside the firewall; and means for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

52. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding

said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

means for placing said e-mail message en route to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

means for directing the e-mail message to a first location inside the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

means for receiving the e-mail message at the first location, for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content, said identifying means being located inside the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

means for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to the validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message, said receiving means being located outside the firewall; and means for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

53. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1,

items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a first arrangement for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and for placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

a second arrangement located within the firewall for selectively receiving the e-mail message within the firewall, for identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

a third arrangement for selectively adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message including the desired additional rich media content, said third arrangement being located outside the firewall and configured for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

54. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user

interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a first arrangement for placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient;

a second arrangement located within the firewall for receiving the e-mail message, for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

a third arrangement for selectively adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message including the desired additional rich media content, said third arrangement being located outside the firewall and configured for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

55. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a

firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a first enhancement configuration within the firewall, said first enhancement configuration being configured for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message, placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, receiving the e-mail message within the firewall, identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message, providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content, and directing the received e-mail message to a predetermined location outside the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

a second enhancement configuration located at said predetermined location, said second enhancement configuration being configured for adding the desired additional rich media content to the forwarded e-mail message, responsive to the validation, to produce an enhanced e-mail message, and redirecting the enhanced e-mail message from the second enhancement server to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

56. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1,

items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a first enhancement configuration within the firewall, said first enhancement configuration being configured for placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient receiving the e-mail message within the firewall, adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the received e-mail message, providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content, and directing the received e- mail message to a predetermined location outside the firewall(see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

a second enhancement configuration located at said predetermined location, said second enhancement configuration being configured for adding the desired additional rich media content to the forwarded e-mail message, responsive to the validation, to produce an enhanced e-mail message, and redirecting the enhanced e-mail message from the second enhancement server to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

57. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1,

items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

means for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and for placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

means located within the firewall for receiving the e-mail message, for identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

means located within the firewall for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message and for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

58. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a

firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

means for placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

means located within the firewall for receiving the e-mail message, for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

means located within the firewall for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message and for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

59. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a first arrangement for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message and for placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient; a second arrangement for selectively receiving the e-mail message within the firewall; a third arrangement for identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content; (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); a fourth arrangement for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message including the desired additional rich media content; a fifth arrangement for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient. (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

60. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a first arrangement for placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient; a second arrangement for selectively receiving the e-mail message within the firewall; a third arrangement for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the received e-mail message and for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content; a fourth arrangement for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message including the desired additional rich media content; and a fifth arrangement for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21).

61. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a first enhancement configuration within the firewall, said first enhancement configuration being configured for adding a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message, placing the e-mail message en route to the intended recipient, receiving the e-mail message within the firewall, identifying the request for

desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message, providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content, and directing the received e-mail message to a predetermined location inside the firewall(see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

a second enhancement configuration located at said predetermined location, said second enhancement configuration being configured for adding the desired additional rich media content to the forwarded e-mail message, responsive to the validation, to produce an enhanced e-mail message, and redirecting the enhanced e-mail message from the second enhancement server to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

64. (previously amended) A computer program arrangement in a computer readable medium for use in a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], said computer program arrangement comprising:

first instructions for receiving the e-mail message within the firewall after said e-mail message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group, said e-mail message including a request for desired additional rich media content; second instructions for identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message; third instructions for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content; fourth instructions for forwarding the received e-mail message to predetermined location outside the firewall; at the predetermined location, fifth instructions for adding the desired additional rich media content to the forwarded e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and sixth instructions for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21).

65. (Original) The computer program arrangement of claim 64, wherein said messaging system further includes a second server located at the predetermined location, and wherein said first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth instructions are distributed at least among the first user group and the first and second servers (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

66. (previously amended) A computer program arrangement in a computer readable medium for use in a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least

one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server, said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said computer program arrangement comprising:

first instructions for receiving the e-mail message within the firewall after said e-mail message has been originated by an originating user of the first user group, said e-mail message including a request for desired additional rich media content [see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67],;

second instructions for identifying the request for desired additional rich media content in the received e-mail message; third instructions for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content; fourth instructions for forwarding the received e-mail message to a predetermined location inside the firewall (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67);

at the predetermined location, fifth instructions for adding the desired additional rich media content to the forwarded e-mail message responsive to said validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message; and sixth instructions for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21).

67. (Original) The computer program arrangement of claim 66 wherein said first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth instructions are distributed at least among the first

location is situated outside of the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

70. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message, said e-mail message being originated by an originating user and including a body, which contains a portion of the e-mail message viewable by the originating user, and for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

means for allowing the originating user to add a reference tag to the e-mail message before the e-mail message has been originated by the originating user, which reference tag is positioned outside of the body of the e-mail message, and for directing the e-mail message, including the reference tag, to a specified location outside of the firewall(see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

at the specified location, means for adding additional rich media content to the body of the e-mail message, responsive to the reference tag, to produce an enhanced e-mail message, and for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

user group and the first server (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21);

68. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

means for allowing an originating user of the e-mail message to add a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message, for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content according to a set of desired criteria, and for directing the e-mail message to a specified location(see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

means for performing additional processing located at the specified location configured for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message, responsive to said validation, to produce an enhanced e-mail message, and for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

69. (Original) The e-mail messaging system of claim 68 further including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server and wherein said predetermined

71. (Original) The e-mail messaging system of claim 70 wherein said preprocessing means further includes means for validating the reference tag according to a set of desired criteria after the e-mail message, including the reference tag, has been originated by the originating user (column 14, lines 15-36).

72. (previously amended) In a multi-user e-mail messaging system interfaced through the Internet and including at least a first user group sharing at least a first server, which first server is, in turn, interfaced to the Internet such that any user of the first user group may send an e-mail message for transfer to an intended recipient selected as at least one of (i) another user in the first user group and (ii) a remote user interfaced to the Internet by a connection other than said first server (see Gough; fig. 1, items 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16; also see abstract), said messaging system including a firewall surrounding said first user group and said first server[see Shapiro; column 11, lines 46-54; column 20, lines 58-67], a configuration comprising:

a local e-mail server system located within the firewall and including an e-mail client plug-in for allowing an originating user of the first user group, which originating user originates said e-mail message, to add a request for desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message, a local enhancement server for providing a validation of the request for desired additional rich media content according to a set of predetermined criteria after the e-mail message, including the request for desired additional rich media content, has been originated by the originating user of the first user group, and also for directing the e-mail message, including the request for desired

additional rich media content, to a predetermined location outside of the firewall (see Gough; column 18, lines 3-20; column 4, lines 1-21); and

an external enhancement server at the predetermined location for adding the desired additional rich media content to the e-mail message responsive to the validation to produce an enhanced e-mail message, and for redirecting the enhanced e-mail message to the intended recipient (see Gough; fig. 3, column 7, lines 43-61; column 3, lines 50-67).

73-76. (canceled)

Conclusion

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE NON-FINAL**. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from examiner should be directed to Jude Jean-Gilles whose telephone number is (571) 272-3914. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and every other Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley, can be reached on (571) 272-3923. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-9000.

Jude Jean-Gilles

Patent Examiner

Art Unit 2143

JJG

February 14, 2006

DAVID WILEY
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